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YALE INTERPRETS THE NEWS

WTIC - 1080

SUNDAYS

6:15 - 6:30 P.M. DST

Next Sunday's speaker - Robert A. Dahl, Associate Professor of Political Science at Yale University.

This is sent you from the Yale University News Bureau.

Sunday, June 21, 1953

OPENING:

Hello, everyone. This is Bernard Mullins speaking to you from New Haven and introducing the 583d broadcast of "Yale Interprets the News," presented in cooperation with WTIC. Each week on this program a member of the Yale Faculty presents his interpretation of news that has made the headlines. Our guest this evening is Richard L. Walker, Assistant Professor of History at Yale University. He will interpret the news behind the headline:

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"COMMUNIST CHINA EMERGES AS A MAJOR

THREAT TO WORLD PEACE"

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Mullins: Mr. Walker, however encouraging the news may be from some of the world's far-flung battlelines, it's depressing to say the least, to hear such a grim headline about Communist China. I'm hoping you can give us some inside information on this new threat to world peace - didn't you make an extensive journey in the Far East not too long ago.

Walker: Yes, Mr. Mullins, at this very time last year I was aboard a plane on my way from Japan to Formosa; and then I went on to Hong Kong, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Burma, India and Pakistan. In all I flew some 35,000 miles.

The information which I gathered on my trip has had much to do with my concern over the Chinese Communist threat, but recent developments have certainly increased that concern. The China of Mao Tse-tung is far more of a threat to world peace than it was a year ago, not only because of its conduct on the international scene, but also because of what it has accomplished internally. The average American is hard-pressed to keep up to date with events in his own country and unfortunately has little time to piece together the significance of developments in such far-off places as China, and so the overall pattern of what has taken place inside China in the last four years has for the most part passed him by. I firmly believe that a failure to appreciate what has so rapidly transpired in China under Communist rule can be fatal to the free world.

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Mullins: Well about all most of us seem able to do, Mr. Walker, is to follow the day to day coverage of China by radio and press. What are these developments which cause you such a grave concern?

Walker: To begin with, Mr. Mullins, let's look at it this way. Four years ago China was a weak, divided, war-weary country with apparently little hope for an independent future; and now after the elapse of such a short period China is a strong, united world power under the control of one of the most efficient, hard-working, cold-blooded and calculating regimes ever established anywhere in the world. Mao and Company have been able successfully to challenge the United States and sixteen other United Nations with forces in Korea and extract truce concessions from us which certainly indicate that the victory is not ours. In the eyes of leaders the world over this is no mean accomplishment.

Mullins: Put in those terms I think we'll have to admit that the Communist regime in China has indeed proved itself to be a formidable one. It would seem to indicate that the purges and mass executions we've heard and read about haven't necessarily been an indication of weakness on the part of the Communists.

Walker: They are just the opposite. Purges and executions in China have been an indication of the ruthless efficiency and strength of the Communist organization. The achievements of the past four years have been almost record-breaking in scope and intensity. Localism and family influence have been virtually eliminated in China. A pattern of total control has been imposed upon a population more than three times that of the United States in an area much larger than the United States. The regime has ruthlessly eliminated all opposition and has killed off more than ten million people including most of those who might have been expected to show any degree of friendship toward the United States and the West. All of this has been accomplished at a pace which has not only impressed the Chinese themselves, but has left most of the rest of the world breathless.

Mullins: Well, Mr. Walker, it has been said that, after all, the Communists in China are still Chinese. It's hard to believe that they've lost pride in the culture of their land which has proved so enduring through the years. How do they reconcile Communism with Chinese tradition?

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Walker: For the most part they don't, Mr. Mullins; and that is one of the most impressive indications of the power of this organization which has seized China. The few years of Communist control have witnessed the calculated destruction of the Chinese civilization. Traditional virtues and values have been uprooted and destroyed. Books have been burned. Old Chinese scholars have gone through a humiliating process of recantation. The old Confucian morality based upon human qualities has been attacked everywhere in the land. Our generation is witnessing the annihilation of the world's oldest living culture, a culture which has withstood the ravages of many past invasions. It is foolish to feel complacent and say that this is nothing new, that the Chinese will be able to withstand this monster which has seized their land. There is a ghastly efficiency and disheartening finality in all that the Communists are doing.

Mullins: Mr. Walker, I can't help but believe that the destruction of Chinese civilization is a pretty big order, even for the Communists. It would seem to me that they would have to offer the Chinese something pretty convincing in its place, something more than the mechanistic and materialistic doctrines of Marx, Lenin and Stalin. What are Mao Tse-tung and his cohorts offering to the Chinese?

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Walker: Their offering is pretty slim. Indeed it is little more than a pathetic mimicking and capsuling of the experiences of Russia under the Soviet regime. For this reason I think that we can very accurately refer to the cataclysmic changes in China as the Stalinization of China. The Communists have copied their Soviet big brothers down to the last detail. There has been, for example, the same type of intellectual purging in China which went on in Russia under Stalin. History arts and sciences are being recast to conform with Marxist theory. Thought control along with the apparatus of thought police has taken hold of every field. Even the Chinese linguists have had to knuckle under and adhere abjectly to Stalin's theories of linguistics. Again, the cult of leader-worshipping of Mao Tse-tung -- replete with mass parades, posters, laudatory poems, etc. -- has been built on the soviet Stalin model.

Mullins: Well, Mr. Walker, when you talk in terms of the Stalinization of China, one is reminded of developments associated with Stalin's long reign in Russia, such as collectivization, slave labor, and five-year plans. Am I to gather that the Communists are following the pattern in all these details?

Walker: Most assuredly, Mr. Mullins. Let's take up just a few of these items one by one. You mentioned five-year plans. The Chinese Communists have launched their first five-year plan for capital construction this year. It is a ruthless plan with inflexible goals, and as a result many Chinese will suffer additional drains on their already unbelievably low level of subsistence. Likewise, collectivization started in real earnest two years ago in northern China. In fact, there is a probability that the germ warfare charges were used in part by the regime to cover up the dislocations and dissatisfaction caused by the initial moves in the collectivization process. The Communists boast of collective farms as far south as Fukien province where the type of agriculture -- rice paddies -- can in no way be considered suitable for this scheme. Then there is the matter of slave labor which the Communists euphemistically call "reform through labor service". The slave laborers in China are already almost as numerous as the slave laborers in the Soviet Union, and most of them are old people and former intellectuals.

Mullins: It does sound like the Stalinization of China after all, and an extremely thorough job of it. How have they been able to accomplish all this, Mr. Walker?

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Walker: The reason, for the most part, Mr. Mullins, lies in the development under Communism of a whole new dimension of power, a power which we have only begun to appreciate. For lack of a better term we can call it psychological mass coercion. This psychological mass coercion represents a synthesis of latest developments, Soviet and Western, in many fields, such as sociology, anthropology, psychology, linguistics and so forth. The West may have been the first to split the atom, but the Soviets have been the first to employ modern science to bring masses of humans under total control. China has been the Nevada Flats testing-ground for this new Communist super-weapon, and I fear that we must concede its success.

Mullins: Is this new psychological weapon of which you speak the same thing as the "brain-washing" we've been hearing about? There was quite a bit about it in the news just after our wounded prisoners were released by the Communists in Korea.

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Walker: Only in part, and then in the main those accounts were rather sketchy. Psychological mass coercion involves the strategy of terror, thorough indoctrination, and the total mechanistic organization of human beings. This is the force with which the Communists have turned their country into a unified world power in record time; this is the force which has enabled a former semi-colonial area to challenge the West successfully in Korea; this is the force which enables Mao Tse-tung to make his bid for leadership throughout Asia and to do so with great self-confidence; this is the force which enables him to tell us he does not fear our atom bombs.

Mullins: Mr. Walker, I suppose it should be obvious that China under this new power you call psychological mass coercion actually constitutes a threat to world peace, but I'd like to hear your specific reasons for arriving at that conclusion.

Walker: In the first place, the achievements in China constitute a successful pattern for turning an economically underdeveloped area into a powerful and completely loyal satellite of the Soviet Union. It is the power, unity and successful challenging of the West which makes this pattern attractive to many leaders in the underdeveloped areas of the world. They do not worry much about the veiled imperialism of the Soviet Union, and we may be sure that the Kremlin will apply the successful China pattern wherever and whenever the opportunity arises. Secondly, the Communist leaders in China preach the same ultimate goal as their Kremlin masters, the utter destruction of our way of life. Temporary truces or even peace settlements are regarded by them as mere pauses in a struggle to the end; and the new Communist methods of mass control can spell out the annihilation of our civilization if we drop our guard for a moment. Thirdly, the Chinese Communists are a threat to world peace because their very success at home and in Korea breeds defeatism among those leaders in Asia who would resist Communism and unity among those leaders who seek power for their country regardless of human costs.

Mullins: So the long stalemate in Korea has really enhanced the prestige of the Chinese Communists in Asia.

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Walker: It has established Mao's undisputed claim to Communist leadership there, and this is yet another way in which the Peking regime threatens world peace. The Chinese threaten to bring all of Asia into the Soviet orbit, either by their own imperial expansion or through their channeling of Soviet aid to local Communist leaders. Thus we can look for increased military pressure in Indo-China, Malaya, and Burma and increased political pressure on India and Japan. Wherever the Communists gain control psychological mass coercion will be immediately imposed. The war between freedom and cultural destruction in Asia has barely started, but the lines have been clearly drawn by the events in China. Thus, while we must recognize that the ultimate source of the threat is the Soviet Union, we dare not ignore the threat which China poses in Asia where the main issue can be obscured by local nationalism and where there is neither the awareness of the Communist threat nor the unified determination to resist it which has developed in Europe. This is why China under the Communists has become a major threat to world peace.

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Mullins: Mr. Walker, our time is almost up, but I do want to ask one more question, which undoubtedly is the most important of all - and that is --- how can we cope with this new threat of Communist China?

Walker: Obviously, Mr. Mullins, there are no easy answers. To begin with we must guarantee that no further areas fall under Communist domination. Any further successes will make both the defeatism among our friends and the rashness and self-confidence of our enemies snowball. Part of preventing further Communist expansion involves showing other peoples that we do indeed respect the dignity and richness of their cultures and that the Communists coldly plan their destruction. There is now plenty of evidence available from China to show what can happen to people who are seduced by Communist propaganda. Next, we must study this new weapon of the Communists with great care in order to discover its weaknesses. In Asia we must support the Chinese Nationalists who are preserving Chinese culture until such time as the telling weaknesses in the Communist structure have been uncovered. In all that we do, I firmly believe that we must stand resolute in the realization that there can be no compromise with regimes like that in China which slaughter wantonly, enslave brutally, threaten peace continuously, and pulverize civilizations totally.

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